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## News



### Harvesting at the "Temple"

There are places in Italy where wine is much more closely tied to history than others, and one of these is without a doubt the "Valley of Temples" in Agrigento, Sicily, where the 2012 harvest has just begun in the ancient vineyards of the Archaeological Park, right below Juno's Temple (pictured above). This is the first harvest that the Park's administration is doing in partnership with the Winemakers Association of Canicatti, and production will be partly focused on "Diodoros", a wine that will be sold in the park itself, like the olive oil produced from the park's olive trees. Creating tastes, aromas and feelings that can take one traveling back in time.



SMS

### "Inopportune" forecasts

According to Italian wine professionals association Assoenologi, the 2012 harvest will drop 3.5% over 2011, and 8% compared to the average in the last five years. The 2012 harvest "is the most scarce since 1950, when 41 million hectolitres of wine were produced, and northern regions suffered the most, with drops of 5% to 15% in production, while southern regions held their ground or even grew in production", General Director Giuseppe Martelli stated. But not all is yet lost: as of today, less than 15% of all grapes has been harvested: the rest will be harvested in the second half of September". Still, Martelli pointed out, "forecasts are inopportune at this time, because September, given the incoming weather change, will be decisive, especially for reds".

## Report

### The invasion of the drones

Innovation in the vineyards is ever more technologically driven, as the idea of engineer Luca Biagiotti demonstrates: his company focuses on aerial HD videos of vineyards and estates, created with remote-controlled drones equipped with professional cameras. Biagiotti had his eureka moment in Central Park, "where a drone was doing something similar", and producers in Chianti Classico and Montalcino bet on his idea (see images online at [www.digitalprototypes.it/aerial-imaging.html](http://www.digitalprototypes.it/aerial-imaging.html)).

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## First Page

### Harvest time for Italy's whites: in the North...

The 2012 harvest for white wines is already going on in some of Italy's territories and will soon commence in others, and even though all producers are suffering a drop in quantity, expectations on quality are surprisingly even better than last year's. This is the sentiment that Winenews registered among Italy's winemakers. Starting from the North, in Alto Adige, names like Cantina di Termeno and Cantina di Terlano describe their harvest just like 2011, with healthy grapes and sugar values and acidity unexpectedly good, given the weather. There is optimism in Trentino as well, where producers like Mezzacorona and La-Vis have already cut the first bunches (even if the lion's share will be cut in the first days of September), and the health of varieties like Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay and Müller Thurgau gives hope for a good year, also thanks to the lower temperatures in the last few days. The harvest has already begun in Friuli Venezia Giulia as well, where, as winemaker Venica explained, even if this year has been trying and the possibility of watering has been vital, analysis of the grapes is giving good signs, though the harvest is bound to be hard to manage, given the different ripening times of each vineyard. Veneto also harbours high hopes, at least for white grapes that will become Prosecco, as Bisol explained: the harvest will begin between the 10th and the 15th of September, with a limited drop in quantity and quality predicted at the very least, as good. Same goes for Tuscany, but with bunches still on the plants for Vernaccia di San Gimignano: the Consortium stated that they would begin their harvest at the beginning of September. The situation is more uncertain in Umbria, in the area of Orvieto Classico where, as Decugnano dei Barbi told Winenews, the harvest began after August 15th, just like in 2011, but the drought has led to a sharp drop in quantity, and as far as quality is concerned, only time will tell. Verdicchio producer Umani Ronchi, from Marche, is also harvesting earlier than in 2011, with lower quantity but quality predicted to be even better than last year's, and the rains forecasted for the next few days might even improve things.

## Focus

### ...and in the South. With optimism

In Campania, and especially in Irpinia, the 2012 harvest has yet to begin: Falanghina will blaze the trail in mid-September, as winemaker Mastroberardino told Winenews, and even if the quantity will be lower than 2011, vines are healthy, with no signs of water stress. White grapes are partly in the cellars already in Sicily instead, especially international varieties (the traditional and indigenous ones will be harvested from September onwards) and everything is going "smoothly", according to producers Donnafugata and Planeta, with no anomalies to speak of: the hot climate was felt, but it was continuous and regular, with no peaks. There will be a little less quantity but the grapes are healthy, possible indicators of a very good vintage. The 2012 harvest has begun in Sardinia for Vermentino as well, a tad earlier than 2011, but with the lion's share to come in September, as winemaker Argiolas explained. And even if quantities are expected to drop here as well, irrigation during the hottest days and the sharp drop in temperatures are pointing towards a vintage even better than last year's. Now, then, it is time to be patient and wait for the verdict of the glass.



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## Wine & Food

### From penmanship to winemaking: Vespa becomes a producer?

Renowned Italian journalist and wine aficionado Bruno Vespa (he is the author of a weekly wine column in "Panorama" magazine) has apparently just become a winemaker in Manduria, Apulia. According to local sources, Vespa and his wife bought 20 hectares of vineyards from the Cuturi estate. Illustrious oenologist Riccardo Cotarella suggested the venture and will curate the wines, mainly Primitivo di Manduria. Following Zonin and Antinori, Vespa is the first VIP not belonging to the world of wine to invest in the region. Might the era of Pugliashire be at hand?

## For the record

### Portrait of an oenologist

The history of renowned oenologist Riccardo Cotarella is the subject matter of the book authored by Nino d'Antonio, titled "Riccardo Cotarella. Quasi un ritratto"

("almost a portrait"). A tale of both his personal history, from his "incursions" in French Chateaux to his relationship with the Moratti family, and of Italian wine at large.

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